

In the Claims

1-12 (Canceled)

13 (Currently amended). A pharmaceutical composition comprising:

a nucleic acid sequence encoding a natriuretic hormone peptide, or a biologically active portion of the natriuretic hormone peptide, wherein the natriuretic hormone peptide comprises a Glycine at the amino terminus position of the peptide an amino acid sequence comprising SEQ ID NO:5 or a homolog thereof, and an operably linked promoter sequence; and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

Claims 14-19 (Canceled).

20 (Currently amended). An expression vector comprising:

a nucleic acid sequence encoding a natriuretic hormone peptide comprising a biologically active portion of an amino acid sequence comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:5, SEQ ID NO:6, or a homolog of SEQ ID NO:5 or SEQ ID NO:6; and an operably linked promoter sequence.

21 (Previously presented). The expression vector of claim 20, wherein the natriuretic hormone peptide comprises an amino acid sequence comprising SEQ ID NO:6.

22 (Canceled).

23 (Currently amended). An isolated cell comprising a nucleic acid sequence encoding a natriuretic hormone peptide, the peptide comprising a biologically active portion of an amino acid sequence comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:5, SEQ ID NO:6, or a homolog of SEQ ID NO:5 or SEQ ID NO:6, and an operably linked promoter sequence.

24 (Previously presented). The isolated cell of claim 23, wherein the natriuretic hormone peptide comprises an amino acid sequence comprising SEQ ID NO:6.

25 (Currently amended). An isolated nucleic acid sequence encoding a biologically active portion of an amino acid sequence consisting essentially of: SEQ ID NO:5, SEQ ID NO:6, or a homolog of SEQ ID NO:5 or SEQ ID NO:6.

26 (Canceled).

27 (Previously presented). The pharmaceutical composition of claim 13, further comprising a chitosan.

28 (Currently amended). An expression vector comprising: a nucleic acid sequence encoding a natriuretic hormone peptide, or a biologically active portion of the natriuretic hormone peptide, wherein the natriuretic hormone peptide comprises a Glycine at the amino terminus position of the ~~peptide~~ an amino acid sequence comprising SEQ ID NO:5 or a homolog thereof, and an operably linked promoter sequence.

29 (Currently amended). An isolated cell comprising a nucleic acid sequence encoding a natriuretic hormone peptide, or a biologically active portion of the natriuretic hormone peptide, wherein the natriuretic hormone peptide comprises a Glycine at the amino terminus position of the ~~peptide~~ an amino acid sequence comprising SEQ ID NO:5 or a homolog thereof, and an operably linked promoter sequence.

30 (Currently amended). An isolated nucleic acid sequence encoding a natriuretic hormone peptide, or a biologically active portion of the natriuretic hormone peptide, wherein the natriuretic hormone peptide comprises a Glycine at the amino terminus position of the ~~peptide~~ an amino acid sequence comprising SEQ ID NO:5 or a homolog thereof.

Claims 31-42 (Canceled).

43 (Previously presented). The pharmaceutical composition of claim 13, further comprising a liposome.

Claim 44 (Canceled)

45 (Currently amended). The expression vector of ~~claim 44~~ claim 28, wherein the expression vector is a DNA plasmid.

Claims 46-47 (Canceled)

48 (Previously presented). The pharmaceutical composition according to claim 13, wherein the natriuretic hormone peptide consists of the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:5.

49 (Previously presented). The expression vector according to claim 28, wherein the natriuretic hormone peptide consists of the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:5.

50 (Previously presented). The isolated cell according to claim 29, wherein the natriuretic hormone peptide consists of the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:5.

51 (Previously presented). The isolated nucleic acid sequence according to claim 30, wherein the natriuretic hormone peptide consists of the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:5.

52 (Currently amended). The pharmaceutical composition according to claim 13, wherein the nucleic acid sequence comprises the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:12 or SEQ ID NO:18.

53 (Currently amended). The expression vector according to claim 20, wherein the nucleic acid sequence comprises the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:12, SEQ ID NO:13, SEQ ID NO:18, or SEQ ID NO:19.

54 (Currently amended). The isolated cell according to claim 23, wherein the nucleic acid sequence comprises the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:12, SEQ ID NO:13, SEQ ID NO:18, or SEQ ID NO:19.

55 (Currently amended). The isolated nucleic acid sequence according to claim 25, wherein the nucleic acid sequence comprises the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:12, SEQ ID NO:13, SEQ ID NO:18, or SEQ ID NO:19.

56 (Currently amended). The expression vector according to claim 28, wherein the nucleic acid sequence comprises the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:12 or SEQ ID NO:18.

57 (Currently amended). The isolated cell according to claim 29, wherein the nucleic acid sequence comprises the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:12 or SEQ ID NO:18.

58 (Currently amended). The isolated nucleic acid sequence according to claim 30, wherein the nucleic acid sequence comprises the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:12 or SEQ ID NO:18.

59 (New). A pharmaceutical composition comprising:  
a nucleic acid sequence encoding a natriuretic hormone peptide, or a biologically active portion of the natriuretic hormone peptide, wherein the natriuretic hormone peptide comprises an amino acid sequence comprising SEQ ID NO:6 or a homolog thereof, and an operably linked promoter sequence; and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

60 (New). The pharmaceutical composition of claim 59, further comprising a liposome.

61 (New). The pharmaceutical composition according to claim 59, wherein the natriuretic hormone peptide consists of the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:6.

62 (New). The pharmaceutical composition according to claim 59, wherein the nucleic acid sequence comprises the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:13 or SEQ ID NO:19.